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Tuscaroras plan to appeal recognition rejection

🕒 October 2, 2019 👤 robesonian 📁 News, Top Stories 💬 14

Scott Bigelow - Staff writer



PEMBROKE — After the rejection of a bid for state recognition in September by the North Carolina Commission of Indian Affairs, a confederacy of Tuscarora tribes in Robeson County plan an appeal within two weeks.

The denial of a seat at the table with 11 other state recognized tribes was no surprise to Tamra Lowry, who is leading the effort on behalf of three Tuscarora groups located across Robeson County.

“We continued to send genealogical and historical data to the commission right up to the hearing on Sept. 14,” Lowry said. “At this point, our lawyers are preparing an appeal before the 30-day deadline on Oct. 14.”

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Lowry -

“The United States government recognized the Lumbee as a Tribe in 1956, and included Robeson and surrounding counties as its territory,” the resolution reads in part. Further, the resolution states that the Tuscaroras have not functioned with a tribal government “throughout history.”

Lowry calls the claim of sovereign territory misleading at best.

“They have no sovereign territory,” she said.

With three members on the 21-member state commission and its chairman, the Lumbees are the largest and most powerful tribe in North Carolina and at the commission.

“We were told the Lumbee delegation would not vote on our petition,” Lowry said, noting that the Lumbee resolution prejudged the outcome before hearing the evidence. “They have influence, regardless.”

The Tuscarora’s 50-page petition links American Indians in Southeast North Carolina to the Tuscarora Tribe dating back to the 18th century. The powerful tribe, which is now headquartered in New York, was defeated in a major war, and scattered into the Carolinas.

Tuscarora remnants migrated south through Virginia and eastern North Carolina. Indian hero Henry Berry Lowrie claimed Tuscarora ancestry.

Lumbee historians generally agree that the Tuscarora are one of several tribes that settled along the Lumbee River. The larger Tuscarora Tribe of New York does not recognize groups that splintered away from the main branch of the tribe, despite maintaining some contacts with them.

Lowry believes the evidence compiled in the application deserves recognition. In a July hearing that lasted nearly four hours, the commission decided against the Tuscaroras.

“We want a voice in state Indian affairs and to participate in cultural affairs with the 11 state-recognized Indian tribes,” Lowry said. “Casinos may be an issue. It all comes down to money.”

If the Tuscaroras in New York recognized the North Carolina branch, it may have legal standing to build a casino here, Lowry said. Realistically, that is not part of the tribe’s thinking.

State recognition would give the Tuscaroras, who number several thousand in and around Robeson County, standing for grants and other programs that other tribes appear not to be willing to share.

Meanwhile, she and the Tuscarora will carry on with their efforts to win state recognition through the Commission of Indian Affairs and through the courts if necessary, Lowry said.

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Indian Affairs Commission Director Greg Richardson was not available for comment, and the commission’s website had no information.

The cards appeared to be stacked against the Tuscaroras, who began the work to gain state recognition in 1980.

The Lumbee Tribal Council passed a resolution opposing the Tuscaroras’ recognition bid in February. The resolution states that the Tuscaroras are part of a history of “splinter” factions inside Lumbee sovereign territory.

“The United States government recognized the Lumbee as a Tribe in 1956, and included Robeson and surrounding counties as its territory,” the resolution reads in part. Further, the resolution states that the Tuscaroras have not functioned with a tribal government “throughout history.”

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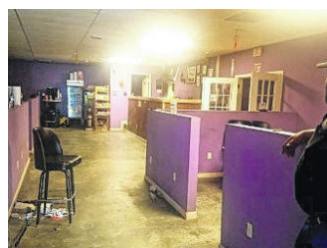
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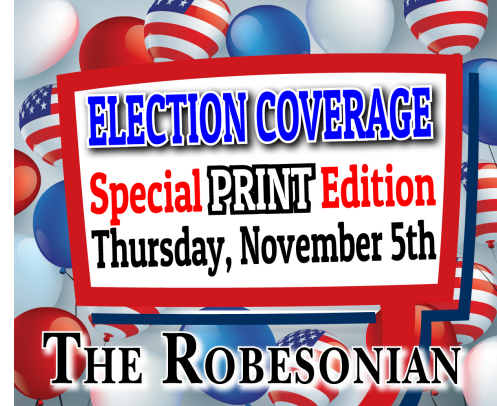
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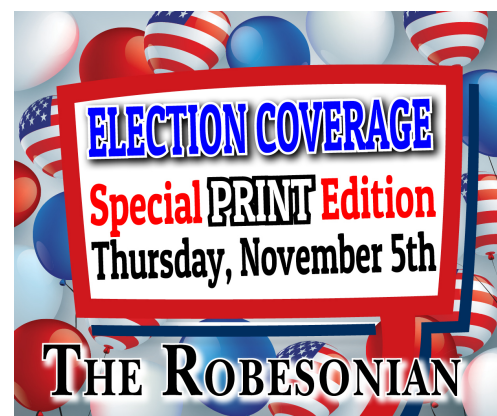
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EDITOR'S PICKS



Maxton man faces charges related to violation of 'nuisance' order

October 27, 2020

LUMBERTON — A Maxton man was arrested Monday for failure to appear in Robeson County Superior Court and allegedly violating a judicial order to stay away from a location in Maxton that has been identified as a "nuisance" and a site of various criminal activities.

[...]

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Robesonian

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MythBustin • a year ago

Tuscorora is a real tribe , the people may be remnants, the Lumbee are just Mulattos that stole a fabricated Indian identity without ever being tribal or sovereign the Lumbee are an invented tribe for cash benefits.



1 ^ | v • Reply • Share >



CHICKEN&BROCCOLI • a year ago • edited

If they want full recognition I think they should have it, along with the Lumbee. In a day in time when an adult male can use the women's restroom, this is a slap in the face to anyone that has been held back from legitimate claims including: race, religion, and heritage.

But that's ok, we can acknowledge that a natural born man is a woman.

2 ^ | v • Reply • Share >



Ron360 → CHICKEN&BROCCOLI • a year ago

Clams?

^ | v • Reply • Share >



CHICKEN&BROCCOLI → Ron360 • a year ago • edited

ouch, yeah.....fixed. LOL and shrimp too

1 ^ | v • Reply • Share >



Sweetgrass • a year ago • edited

The article doesn't mention that the Tuscarora Nation of New York sent their attorney down to the September 20th hearing. The attorney read the statement that they do not recognize this group or any group in NC. And Tamra Lowry is correct; it does come down to money; the money these groups are making off of the Tuscarora and Six Nations name and history. There also was a statement read from the Tadodaho, the leader of the Six Nations Haudenosaunee Confederacy, holder of the ancient title. This historical letter stated they do not recognize this group nor any groups, and the gambling operations being conducted in our names. There was so much more to this hearing than what the article states; when the historical Six Nations Confederacy intervenes, this is a powerful statement of the non-legitimacy of these groups.

6 ^ | v • Reply • Share >



The election may not be over election night

October 27, 2020

Voters and media alike, beware: We may not know the winners next Tuesday night. We may not know until all eligible absentee ballots are counted days later.

[...]

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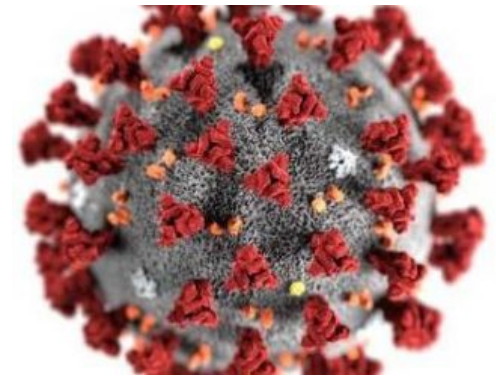
UNCP's leader doesn't deserve grief for being at Trump rally

October 27, 2020

Regardless of your political beliefs or your stance on federal recognition of the Lumbee Tribe, you have to tip your hat to a man who had to know he was walking into a no-win situation, opening himself up to the barbs of anger and criticism. But walk in he did.

[...]

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MythBustin → Sweetgrass • a year ago

the lumbee as well are non legitimate and not authentic there is no Lumbee history!



1 ^ | v • Reply • Share >



AnonymousNative • a year ago

For the sake of their credibility and reputation, I sincerely hope that The Robesonian corrected the many critical errors and falsehoods in this article before it went to print.

1 ^ | v • Reply • Share >



MythBustin → AnonymousNative • a year ago

Article statesThe United States government recognized the Lumbee as a Tribe in 1956, and included Robeson and surrounding counties as its territory," This is false the federal government did not and has never Recognized the "Lumbee" as a tribe, the 1956 act is a mere name "designation "for a group of" people" living around the county who claim ancestry and no where in it does it state recognition or acknowledgment by the Feds. a Name" designation "is not Federal acknowledgment nor Federal recognition.Sovereignty has never been granted to this cultural group regardless of their political power or claims.

1 ^ | v • Reply • Share >



Breadcrumbs • a year ago • edited

When did the Robesonian begin publishing satire?

- 1) There are eight recognized Tribes in North Carolina.
- 2) There was no hearing on September 14th. The North Carolina Commission of Indian Affairs meeting was September 20th.
- 3) Why on Earth would anyone continue to submit new information up until the last minute? Regardless of what the rules allow, do you or do you not want the Commission to have enough time to review your information?
- 4) If you are still compiling enormous amounts of evidence, why would anyone take this to court? It's clear you are still in Discovery.
- 5) Henry Berry Lowrie never once declared he was Tuscarora.
- 6) Tamra Lowry brought in an "expert" Gerald Sider at the July hearing and never advised him of what their deficiencies were. She then spent her time talking about everything but their deficiencies. The State should sue them for the thousands of wasted tax payer dollars.
- 7) The resolution passed by the Lumbee Tribe is available online at the Tribe's website. Please read it.
- 8) The Great Law of Peace forbids gambling and casinos. Period. End of story.

[see more](#)

7 ^ | v • Reply • Share >

Robeson County's COVID-19 death toll now at 101

October 27, 2020

LUMBERTON — Robeson County surpassed the grim milestone of 100 deaths related to COVID-19 when three were reported Tuesday by the Robeson County Health Department.

[...]



Trump support for Lumbee recognition a big part of talk about rally

October 27, 2020

LUMBERTON — Talk of President Donald Trump's rally Saturday at the county fairgrounds still was linked to his support of federal recognition for the Lumbee Tribe days after he left.

[...]



Crime report

October 27, 2020

The following thefts were reported Monday and Tuesday to the Robeson County Sheriff's Office:

[...]





MythBustin → Breadcrumbs • a year ago

However the Lumbee are a club and are not" Sovereign", they have no legal authority other than the same as any other citizen and are not a legal Government .What law gives the Lumbee Sovereign powers? Only federally recognized tribes that are acknowledged by the federal government are sovereign the lumbee are no more sovereign than any other club or group.

^ | v • Reply • Share >



MythBustin → Breadcrumbs • a year ago

Henry B.Lowry claimed his grandparent was part Tuscorora but not a tribal member just a mix mulatto he also claimed to be part Senegal and Mulatto.

1 ^ | v • Reply • Share >



James Locklear → Breadcrumbs • a year ago • edited

All that may or may not be true, but let's not fool ourselves about the casino's, they already tried opening up them casino's without the proper paperwork on more than one occassion. These Tuscaroras was peddling dope too. It don't look good. <https://www.newsobserver.co...>
<https://wpde.com/news/local...>

2 ^ | v 1 • Reply • Share >



Karen Todd Dyer Nance • a year ago

Keep voting for those Republicans.

1 ^ | v 1 • Reply • Share >



G C Bryan → Karen Todd Dyer Nance • a year ago

Thank you for backing the Republicans.

2 ^ | v • Reply • Share >



Ron360 → Karen Todd Dyer Nance • a year ago

Best advice you've given yet. #owiseone ;)

2 ^ | v • Reply • Share >



Karen Todd Dyer Nance → Ron360 • a year ago

And you know I was serious. The Republicans start waving that carrot around election/re election time and then...crickets.

^ | v • Reply • Share >



G C Bryan → Karen Todd Dyer Nance • a year ago

Sounds like another liberal who refuses to look at the numbers. People are working in larger numbers than ever before, the wall is being built, etc. All this while our great President Donald J Trump has had to fight for everyone of his programs while fighting D's on every turn. Keeping fighting for tax cuts and less regulations Mr. President.

1 ^ | v • Reply • Share >



James Locklear • a year ago

Pembroke Planning Board schedules special meeting for Thursday

October 27, 2020

PEMBROKE — The Planning Board here has scheduled a special meeting for 5 p.m. Thursday.

[...]

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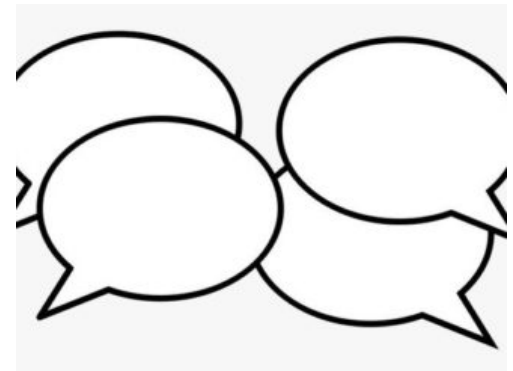
Lumberton man faces charges after being arrested in St. Pauls

October 26, 2020

ST. PAULS — A 20-year-old Lumberton man faces several charges after being arrested in connection to an Oct. 19 purse-snatching incident.

[...]

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Quotes of the week

October 26, 2020

"I want Miss Tammy to send a letter to the beaver guy."

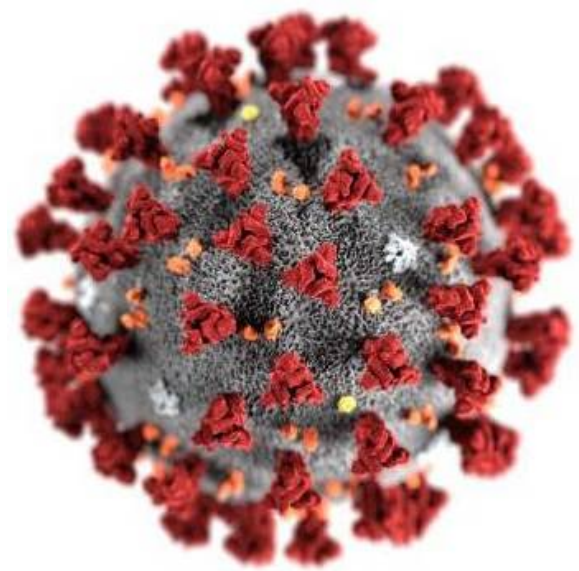
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Parmesan Baked Pork Chops



Robeson County's COVID-19 death toll now at 101



October 27, 2020

LUMBERTON — Robeson County surpassed the grim milestone of 100 deaths related to COVID-19 when three were reported Tuesday by the Robeson County Health Department.

A total of 101 people have now died as a result of contracting the novel coronavirus since the first case was reported March 21.

There have been 10 deaths in the past six days, said Bill Smith, county Health Department director. Of those 10, three were people less than 60 years old.

A total of 5,850 county residents have tested positive for COVID-19 as of Monday, according to the Health Department.

"Hitting 100 is more of an eye-catching moment," Smith said. "The message of masking, distancing and sanitizing has been said for seven months. If someone isn't doing it, it isn't because they don't know better, it's because they do not want to."

Some of the people who died were positive about their outcome, he said.

"I am familiar with some of the deaths, and by and large, they were functioning people and had a good outlook, albeit not necessarily lengthy," he said. "Unfortunately, many families did not get to say 'good-bye' and the patient died alone."

"There is nothing about this virus that should be taken lightly irrespective of a person's age."



Democrats may fall just short

October 26, 2020

RALEIGH — Of all the important electoral contests on North Carolina's ballot, our General Assembly races will be among the most consequential.

[...]

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Deadline to request absentee ballot is 5 p.m. Tuesday

October 26, 2020

RALEIGH — The deadline to request an absentee ballot for use during the 2020 general election is 5 p.m. Tuesday.

[...]

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Robeson County Bears building as first season concludes

Underlying health conditions is a main factor in the virus-related deaths throughout the state, Smith said.

“Half of North Carolinians have an underlying health condition — diabetes, blood pressure, overweight, asthma, lung issues, sickle cell, etc.,” he said. “It would be fair to say that almost all people had some condition that COVID was able to exacerbate.”

Robeson County represents 1.3% of the state’s population and has accounted for 2.4% of deaths related to COVID-19, according to the Health Department.

“This could be reflective of the relative unhealthiness of the residents,” Smith said.

Joanne Anderson, the president and CEO, reiterated Smith’s message that it’s up to the individual to adhere to safety precautions put in place to lower the spread of the coronavirus.

“I am saddened to hear that we have reached 100 COVID-related deaths in Robeson County,” she said. “I believe that we should all be working together to reduce the spread of the virus, understanding that our actions could have consequences that reach beyond ourselves and impact others in our community.”

Southeastern Health has implemented every safety measure recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, she said.

“We do not believe that there have been any cases of COVID-19 that have been contracted while any patients have been hospitalized at Southeastern Regional Medical Center,” Anderson said.

The chief medial officer for the Robeson Health Care Corporation stressed adhering to the mandate of wearing a face-covering, keeping a safe distance of at least 6 feet from others, and keeping hands clean throughout the day.

“This virus is significantly more deadly than the flu,” Dr. Eugene Nor said.

One of the deadliest thoughts among people is the misconception that because they are surrounded by people with whom they are familiar, they are safe, he said. People should not let their guard down for the sake of themselves and others.

“I worry about those who live in large families where multiple people are going into and out of the home every day as a part of their job or to go to stores, run errands, etc,” he said. “I think some people feel that since they live with someone, or see someone every day, that they are safe to be around.

“You don’t know who that person has been around during the course of a given day. It only takes one exposure involving one person in a given household to result in everyone in that household getting infected.”

October 26, 2020
FAYETTEVILLE — The Robeson County Bears semi-professional football team finished its first season with a close loss to the Rockingham County Grizzlies on Saturday, one in which the fate of the game — and likely their Central Carolina Football League playoff chances — was sealed with a missed opportunity inside the 10-yard line in the game’s final seconds.

[...]

Trump support for Lumbee recognition a big part of talk about rally



October 27, 2020

LUMBERTON — Talk of President Donald Trump's rally Saturday at the county fairgrounds still was linked to his support of federal recognition for the Lumbee Tribe days after he left.

"The real story is Lumbee recognition," said Channing Jones, Robeson County's Economic Development director.

If the tribe obtains federal recognition it will be the greatest economic stimulus in Robeson County's history, he said. The effects will be felt along Interstate 95 on either side of the county.

"The economic impact it will bring to just about every business owner in the county, it will be tremendous," Jones said.

Arnold West, owner of Village Station and Arnold's restaurants, saw an immediate economic benefit from Trump's rally.

"It really brought a lot of people right by my front doors," West said.

Village Station and Arnold's Restaurant opened 2 p.m. Saturday, and many people stopped by after the rally to have lunch, he said.

"We were a little busier after he left town," West said.

The restaurant owner said he couldn't see many other long-term effects of the president's stop in Lumberton.

"I can't see it having a long-term effect unless he's reelected," West said.

His businesses weren't affected by the president's visit to Lumberton, said Bryan Britt, owner of Cakes and Pastries, and chairman of the Lumberton Area Chamber of Commerce board of directors. But, he did hear many customers talking about the rally at the fairgrounds.

"I had the same amount of business," Britt said. "I didn't have any increase or decrease in business."

But, federal recognition of the Lumbee Tribe would be a game changer for the county, he said.

Federal recognition would be an economic boost that would affect the county for years to come, Britt said. He supports the tribe's quest of more than 100 years for federal recognition.

"It sure couldn't hurt us for whatever they get," he said.

It's good that Trump came and that he wants the Lumbee Tribe to have federal recognition, said Shanna Hammonds, a Lumberton resident and Lumbee Tribe member.

"Because at the end of the day, every other tribe has been recognized," Hammonds said.

"Even though we might not have written history, we still have history. I don't see a problem with it. It ain't for the money or anything like that."

Not everyone is certain the county realized an immediate benefit from Trump's visit.

"I'm not sure. I don't know what all happened. I wasn't here or anything, so I'm not sure," said Lamar Courmon, of Pembroke.

The rally could have had an immediate economic affect to local businesses, he said.

"I don't know how many people actually came and if they actually stopped to the stores and stuff," Courmon said. "If they stopped somewhere, hopefully they benefited, if they stopped in the stores and cool spots, and hopefully that put some money in RobCo's pocket."

Maria Quick, of Lumberton, said she believes it's a good thing any time a presidential candidate stops somewhere.

"I think anywhere, if you have a presidential candidate, or anybody that's going to help us, if they come to our community that's a good thing," she said. "And whether you like him or not, eventually, if he becomes president again, my personal beliefs are he's still our president and we should support him."

Having Trump come to what many people think of as a small town is a plus, she said.

"Growing up in New York and down here, back and forth all my life, I've seen a lot of the changes, and I think him coming showed that we mean something, just like another big city," Quick said.

At least in one regard, Trump's rally was a history-making event, said Phillip Stephens, Robeson County Republican Party chairman. The party's research indicates it was the first time a sitting president has visited Robeson County.

"Having any sitting president is a historic event for the county," Stephens said. "Seeing the excitement over a Republican president in a formally Democratic county was particularly amazing. I don't think I've ever seen so many Trump & Republican shirts or hats in one place at one time in Robeson County before."

Stephens attended Saturday's rally with state Republican Party Chairman Micheal Whatley, state party staff members, U.S. Reps. Dan Bishop and Richard Hudson, state Sen. Danny Britt Jr., state Rep. Brenden Jones and N.C. House candidate Olivia Oxendine.

"Hopefully, once we get beyond the partisan disagreement the significance historically will certainly be acknowledged by everyone," Stephens said. "It should make everyone proud not to simply be Republican or Democrat, but to be proud to be a Robesonian and be proud to be an American."

Given that the world is in the middle of a pandemic, there could be a health cost in the coming weeks, said Bill Smith, county Health Department director. He would not be surprised to see a spike in COVID-19 cases, but nor would he be surprised if he didn't.

"From the picture I saw chairs were side by side with no spacing between thus no distancing," Smith said. "Our statistics state that Robeson County was not a good candidate for a mass gathering that did not strictly follow the preventive measures.

"One would anticipate positive cases occurring within two weeks, but people with the virus can spread it to others who then spread it, etc., which goes over the course of time. It is like a pebble in a lake and the waves that are created. Being outdoors helps but I did see a substantial number of elderly people who were at the highest risk."

Crime report

October 27, 2020

The following thefts were reported Monday and Tuesday to the Robeson County Sheriff's Office:

Chavila Bullard, Jacobs Road, Maxton; Lynn Scott, Oxendine School Road/N.C. 71 North, Maxton; Norma Locklear, Shaw Road, St. Pauls; Gabriel Bullard, Evergreen Church Road, Pembroke; Steven Lambert, Southfork Road, Parkton; Michael Bommarito, Long Leaf Drive, Lumberton; Joy Evans, Shaw Road, St. Pauls; and Howard Allen, Woody Farm Road, Lumberton.

Terica Lowry reported Monday to the Robeson County Sheriff's Office that a break-in occurred on N.C. 211 West in Red Springs.

Anna Campos, of East Seventh Street in Lumberton, reported Monday to the Lumberton Police Department that someone broke into a vehicle while it was parked at Walmart Neighborhood Market, located on 2985 Elizabethtown Road in Lumberton.

Pembroke Planning Board schedules special meeting for Thursday



October 27, 2020

PEMBROKE — The Planning Board here has scheduled a special meeting for 5 p.m. Thursday.

The meeting is to take place at Town Hall, located at 100 Union Chapel Road in Pembroke.

The purpose of the meeting is discuss amendments to Article 2, "Basic Definitions and Interpretations," and Article 19, "Lighting Ordinance," in the town's Unified Development

Ordinance. The board also will review site plans for the A.S. Thomas parking lot and the Scotland Health Care System's new medical office building.

Lumberton man faces charges after being arrested in St. Pauls



October 26, 2020

ST. PAULS — A 20-year-old Lumberton man faces several charges after being arrested in connection to an Oct. 19 purse-snatching incident.

Dominique Page, of Mud Alley Road, was arrested Sunday and charged with common law robbery, carrying a concealed firearm, possession of a firearm by a convicted felon and conspiracy, according to the St. Pauls Police Department. He was placed in the Robeson County Detention Center under a \$150,000 bond.

The charges are in connection with the Oct. 19 robbery of a woman at the Five Star Gas Station and Convenience Store on Broad Street, according to the police department. Page and one other person are believed to have stolen the woman's purse.

"As a result of the investigation conducted by detectives, Lieutenant Michael Seago signed warrants against Page for the robbery," the department's statement reads in part.

Seago and St. Pauls Police Chief Stephen Dollinger arrested Page after seeing him walking near Martin Luther King Drive on Sunday, according to the police department. Page is a convicted felon, and was carrying a concealed handgun at the time of his arrest.

"Lieutenant Seago did an excellent job investigating this crime, and identifying and arresting this violent subject," the statement reads in part.

"This sends a clear message that these types of crimes will not be tolerated in the St. Pauls community and the St. Pauls Police Department will use every resource at its disposal to bring the violent offenders who commit them to justice," the statement also reads.

Police expect to make another arrest in the case soon, according to the statement.

Deadline to request absentee ballot is 5 p.m. Tuesday



October 26, 2020

RALEIGH — The deadline to request an absentee ballot for use during the 2020 general election is 5 p.m. Tuesday.

“If you want to vote by mail, please request your ballot now,” said Karen Brinson Bell, State Board of Elections executive director. “But if you miss the request deadline, you can still vote early in person through Oct. 31 or on Election Day, Nov. 3, at your assigned precinct.”

Requests for an absentee ballot must be received by a county board of elections by the deadline, according to the State Elections Board. Any person requesting an absentee ballot must be registered to vote before requesting the ballot.

As of 9:30 a.m. Monday, nearly 780,000 North Carolinians had cast their ballot by mail for the Nov. 3 election, according to the State Board. That’s about four times more by-mail voters than in 2016.

The best way to request an absentee ballot by mail is through the State Board’s Absentee Ballot Request Portal: <https://votebymail.ncsbe.gov/app/home>.

Voters may also complete an Absentee Ballot Request Form and email, fax or return the form in-person to their county board of elections. Voters are urged not to mail the form because it likely will not arrive by the request deadline.

To track the status of an absentee ballot request and a mail-in ballot, voters may use BallotTrax: <https://votebymail.ncsbe.gov/app/home>.

Also, voters may check to see whether or not their absentee ballot or in-person early voting ballot was accepted by using the State Board’s Voter Search tool.

Voters who request a ballot but decide to vote in person, can discard the ballot and vote during early voting or on Election Day, according to the State Elections Board. The voter’s mail-in ballot will be spoiled and not counted. A voter may not vote in person if the voter’s mail-in ballot has been accepted.

It's important for anyone who wishes to vote by mail to send or deliver their ballot now to ensure it is received in time, according to the State Board.

Voters may return a completed mail-in ballot in three ways:

- Mail their ballot to their county board of elections. The ballot must be postmarked on or before Election Day.
- Drop their ballot off at any early voting site in their county. To find early voting sites and hours, use the [One-Stop Early Voting Site Search Tool](#).
- Drop their ballot off in person at their county board of elections office through 5 p.m. on Election Day.

For more on voting by mail, visit <https://www.ncsbe.gov/voting/vote-mail>.

UNCP students call for chancellor to resign because he attended Trump rally



October 26, 2020

LUMBERTON — Calls for the resignation of The University of North Carolina at Pembroke's chancellor were made Monday in the wake of his attendance Saturday of a campaign rally in Lumberton for President Donald Trump.

The resignation demands came mainly from UNCP students and alumni who learned of Chancellor Robin Cummings' presence at the rally when Trump pointed him out in the crowd.

About 150 students met by video conference over the weekend and formed the Nonviolent Students Cultivating Change movement. About 50 movement members took part Monday in a protest that began with students marching from Old Main and Cypress Hall and meeting at noon in front of Lumbee Hall, which houses the chancellor's office, and calling for Cummings' resignation.

Movement leader Jaylen Ellis said the protest would last until midnight, and a meeting with Cummings had been scheduled for Tuesday. Ellis also said he was coordinating with the Unified Robeson NAACP Branch. He also is working separately to organize a program to allow students to transfer out of UNCP, and to discourage other minority students from joining the institution.

"I feel like it's just too late for a meeting," he said.

One of the students' concerns is that Cummings' presence was inconsistent with COVID-19 restrictions the university has adopted to keep its doors open this fall semester. Some of the rules prohibit large social gatherings, and mandate face coverings be worn on campus.

Saturday's rally brought in more than 3,000 spectators, according to the Robeson County Sheriff's Office.

Others who turned out to protest said Cummings' presence could be interpreted as a show of support by Cummings and the university for Trump's reelection campaign.

"We're all being tied to Trump supporters," Adeline Kelley said.

A post on Twitter stated that the university supports Trump, which is not the case, Kelley said.

Some students said if Cummings does not resign, they would be willing to accept a "genuine apology" and a path forward that allows for more inclusion.

Thomas Crowe-Allbritton, UNCP alumnus and former president of the Student Government Association, expressed his opposition of Cummings' actions on Saturday.

"Actions speak louder than words," Crowe-Allbritton wrote on Facebook Saturday.

"Chancellor Cummings' presence at the Trump rally today has nullified anything he has said about the march over the summer and anything since then. Let's not even get started on the hypocrisy of him being at a rally where practically no one has a mask."

The negative comments were enough to garner a response from Cummings, who sent out an email addressed to "Bravenation." In it he explained his reasoning and acknowledged that his actions were "inconsistent."

The letter reads, "For essentially my adult life, I have consistently and strongly advocated for full federal recognition for the Lumbee Tribe. In recent weeks, many elected officials have publicly confirmed their support of Lumbee recognition, an outcome the Lumbee Tribe has worked toward over the past 100 years. Advancing and supporting this region is one of our university's driving goals, and the impact of the education, health and housing benefits full federal recognition would bring to UNCP, Robeson County and southeastern North Carolina is a critical step forward in that path. Most importantly, recognition is the just course to correct an injustice.

"I was asked to accompany a delegation of tribal members to an event in Lumberton, where the President was to offer his full support of Lumbee recognition efforts. Both presidential candidates have expressed their support for the Lumbee people, and I remain grateful to them and all who support these long-overdue efforts regardless of political affiliation.

"My commitment and passion for tribal recognition influenced my decision to attend the announcement. I understand and accept the concern and disappointment over participation in a gathering that was well over our campus limitations. While I did maintain social distancing given the seating arrangement provided and wore my mask throughout the event, it was still inconsistent with how we have navigated the fall semester under my direction."

Ellis said the Nonviolent Students Cultivating Change movement supports Lumbee recognition.

“We are in full support of the Lumbee Tribe getting tribal status, and our mission and focus is not to devalue their fight of getting recognized by the government,” Ellis said. “It’s the fact that he was out there when he shouldn’t have been out there.”

Robeson County Republican Party Chairman Phillip Stephens supports the chancellor’s decision to attend the event. It was important that he represent the university’s interest regardless of who is president, Stephens said.

“It’s nonpartisan representation the chancellor provides regardless of who the sitting president is that is visiting the area,” Stephens said. “To criticize the chancellor for representing the interests of the university simply makes it a partisan issue when it shouldn’t be.”

Lumbee Recognition is a bipartisan issue, he said.

“I’d expect the chancellor or any leader for that matter to lobby, attend and represent regardless of the party affiliation of the president,” Stephens said. “I don’t think attendance is a signal of partisanship. I think it’s a signal of leadership.

“I would hope he’d do the same with a democrat president or leader to provide influence over university or tribal affairs that will impact our region.”

As far as safety, concern is understood but the Trump team provided masks, temperature checks and hand sanitizer, and attendance at the event was voluntary, and it was held outside, Stephens said.

Pearlean Revels, the chairman of the Robeson County Democratic Party, did not wish to comment on the matter calling it a “Republican issue.”

Eleven St. Pauls police vehicles get new look thanks to donors



October 26, 2020

ST PAULS — Police cars here are sporting new logos that were funded by donations.

Eleven police vehicles received new graphics on Thursday, police Chief Stephen Dollinger said. The other five vehicles remain unmarked.

“We changed the look of the vehicles to give them a more professional appearance,” Dollinger said.

The police department released a statement Friday thanking donors for funding that made the upgrades possible.

“We would like to thank Jerry, Anthony and Joey Weindel from Superior Flooring and Finish One Industrial Flooring who donated most of the funding for the graphics. These local businesses are always big supporters of our department,” the statement reads in part.

St. Pauls police Lt. Michael Seago said he is proud of the new “sharp” and “beautiful” designs.

The lieutenant, who has served on the force for 19 years, said the patrol cars are the “prettiest” he’s seen.

Seago credited Dollinger for efforts to update the vehicles and improve the department.

“It’s great,” Seago said. “Our chief is great. He’s done a lot for our police department.”

RCCCC launches fundraiser to get coats to children



October 26, 2020

LUMBERTON — The Robeson County Church and Community Center has organized a fundraiser in an effort to provide 250 public school children with coats this winter.

Donations can be made on the Center’s website at <https://www.robesontogether.org/operationwarm/>, in-person or by mailing a donation to the Center, located at 600 W. Fifth St. in Lumberton. The fundraiser ends Nov. 15.

“We started a partnership with Operation Warm last year. They give nonprofits an opportunity to purchase coats for children in need at a discounted rate,” said Brianna Goodwin, the Center’s assistant director for Operations.

“Last year we gave out over 100 coats to students who were identified through PSRC social workers, and this year our goal is to raise \$5,000, which will purchase 250 coats,” she added.

Each coat costs about \$20, at the Center’s discounted rate.

Center workers plan to get the coats to children by Christmas, she said.

Checks can be made payable to the “Robeson County Church and Community Center” with “coats” written in the memo.

Law enforcement agencies work together to ensure safe Trump rally



October 26, 2020

LUMBERTON — Local law enforcement leaders praised interagency collaboration for the web of security that surrounded Saturday's rally for President Donald Trump.

More than 3,000 people attended the event, and multiple law enforcement agencies worked together to close roadways and to keep the security operation running smoothly for the arrival of the president.

Lumberton police Chief Mike McNeill said collaboration between agencies made for a safe event.

The Robeson, Bladen, Columbus and Brunswick county sheriff's offices, State Highway Patrol, St. Pauls and Maxton police departments and the Secret Service were among the agencies providing security for the event. Most of the agencies are mutual aid partners of the Robeson County Sheriff's Office.

"That was the sweetest thing of them all," McNeill said. "We couldn't have pulled it off without having all of those agencies here."

McNeill and his officers closed intersections inside city limits.

"We blocked the intersections so the motorcade could come through," McNeill said.

Among the areas closed by the police was N.C. 41 between Starlite Drive and U.S. 74. The section of N.C. 41 was closed from noon to 3 p.m.

Members of the State Highway Patrol blocked areas in Cumberland County, while St. Pauls police and Columbus County deputies closed Exit 31 so Trump could safely make his way down Interstate 95 after deplaning Air Force One in Fayetteville.

St. Pauls police Lt. Michael Seago said he and others assigned to keep Exit 31 closed were in place about 11:30 a.m. and Trump drove through about 12:15 p.m. Officers and deputies stayed at their post until after 2 p.m.

“We made sure that no one went under the bridge at mile marker 31,” Seago said.

Saturday was his first time working during a U.S. president’s visit to Robeson County by a U.S. president, Seago said.

“It’s just great seeing the president going down the road,” he said.

Seago described Saturday as “a great experience” to add to his 27 years in law enforcement, and hopes to be involved in other similar events in the future.

A member of the State Highway Patrol escorted the president’s motorcade, while also relaying information to 1st Sgt. S.B. Lewis, who kept others at the fairgrounds informed of the president’s location. Lewis also patrolled areas to make sure they were secured by other state troopers.

“We took intersections and overpasses in Cumberland County,” he said.

Lewis said the “strong working relationships” between agencies is the reason the event went as well as it did.

No collisions resulted from road closures or delays caused by the event, he said.

“All things being said, we came out of this with no complaints,” Lewis said, as he was writing an after-action report Monday describing activities related to Saturday’s rally.

Robeson County Sheriff Burnis Wilkins said the event took a lot of planning and coordination.

“We met at our office with Secret Service a couple of days prior to the visit to finalize everything,” Wilkins said.

Members of Robeson County EMS, Lumberton Police Department and other agencies attended the meeting.

“The entire route from the time the president stepped off of the plane to the point he stepped onto the stage in Lumberton was carefully scrutinized for any potential problem. Obviously we couldn’t take this on alone, so we asked outside agencies to assist, particularly with traffic control along I-95,” he said.

Two dogs with bomb-detecting capabilities from the Brunswick County Sheriff’s Office were at the rally. Many first responders and local EMS workers also were present.

Some attendees and a state law enforcement officer were affected by the heat, but no serious medical conditions occurred, the sheriff said.

“Everything went as great as I prayed it would ... Regardless of one’s political views or choice of candidate, we needed this to end well and the positivity towards the recognition of the Lumbee Tribe was a great way to cap off the event. It’s not every day we see a president come to town,” Wilkins said.

The sheriff did not personally meet Trump, but did wave briefly as he left the event.

And the sheriff took with him Saturday experience he will never forget.

"I was involved with security as a former (Alcohol Law Enforcement) state agent when President Bill Clinton came to Tarboro, N.C., in 1999 after Hurricane Floyd wreaked havoc there," Wilkins said.

"I was familiar with how the Secret Service worked, but as sheriff, I was up close and personal with the ladies and gentlemen, which will be on the highlights of my career," he added.

Woman dies on single-vehicle crash; Family starts Go Fund Me page



October 26, 2020

LUMBERTON — The family of a 19-year-old Lumberton woman killed in a single-vehicle accident over the weekend has organized a social media page to help with funeral expenses.

Isabella Ocheenia McCall died Saturday in a crash that occurred about 12:32 a.m. when the 2008 Pontiac passenger vehicle she was driving crashed into a ditch at McKinnon-Pate Road and N.C. 130, about one-quarter mile outside Rowland, according to 1st Sgt. S.B. Lewis, of the State Highway Patrol. McCall failed to stop at the intersection, and the vehicle crashed head-on into the ditch straight ahead of the vehicle.

McCall and her passenger, 21-year-old Alli Brook Williams of Rowland, were not wearing seat belts at the time of the crash, Lewis said. McCall was partially ejected, but Williams remained in the vehicle.

Both were taken to Southeastern Regional Medical Center, he said. McCall died of her injuries. Williams' injuries were not thought to be life-threatening.

"Alcohol impairment is suspected," Lewis said.

Tests to determine impairment will be completed by the N.C. Office of the Chief Medical Examiner in Raleigh, he said.

McCall's brother, Caleb McCall, organized a Go Fund Me account to help her family pay funeral expenses.

"Bella was loved by many and left an incredible impact on every individual who was lucky enough to meet her. She was the life of the party in every get together and she would light up the room with that incredible and infectious smile of hers. She was an incredible mother to her baby girl, and an amazing daughter, sister and friend. We have been so comforted by the wonderful stories and comments we have received on Facebook and by other means," McCall wrote on the Go Fund Me page.

"This money will go to alleviate the financial burden that comes with the sudden passing of a loved one. This fund has been created to help out with funeral cost. Any and all donations are greatly appreciated...Your love and support shown to her over the years has touched us deeply and we are thankful that you were a part of her life Sincerely, The McCall family."

The Go Fund Me page can be found at <https://www.gofundme.com/f/in-loving-memory-of-isabella-mccall>.

Crime report

October 26, 2020

Alma Haywood reported Sunday to the Robeson County Sheriff's Office that a break-in occurred on Drowning Creek Road in Maxton.

The following thefts were reported Sunday and Monday to the Robeson County Sheriff's Office:

Eric Cummings, N.C. 41 South, Fairmont; Sarai Acosta, Maple Leaf Drive, St. Pauls; Jennifer Gonzalez, Poppy Lane, Parkton; and Lynn Scott, Oxendine School Road/N.C. 71 North, Maxton.



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